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ABSTRACT

The effect of sports participation on character development is discussed. Literature concerned with the differences between the formation of male athletes, female athletes, high-skill-level athletes, low-skill-level athletes, and nonathletes is reviewed, as well as research concerned with the differences in personality between participants in different sports. A bibliography of 62 references is appended. (LH)

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CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORTS PARTICIPATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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In World War II the attacking Japanese troops thought they knew what Americans held most dear. They made their banzai attacks not only with weapons but with shouted invectives meant to demoralize. One of those cries was "To hell with Babe Ruth!" So far as I know, they did not defame the religions of Ameirca, vilify our economic system, or condemn motherhood. Instead, they selected a sports hero as representative of what Americans held in highest esteem. (Boiser, 1977, p. 7)

INTRODUCTION

There is little argument about the present status of sport in Ameican life. Sport is one of the primary institutions of our society. But as Loy, Mcpherson, and Kenyon (1978) pointed out, the institutional status of sport is ambivalent, for it seems to lack the legitimate moral basis characteristic of society's other primary institutions. Kahn (1957) stated that the "most fascinating and least reported aspect of American sports is the silent and enduring search for a rationale." (p. 10)

Our national fascination with sports and the great amounts of financial and human resources devoted to sports are often justified by a widespread belief that participation in organized sports builds character. The notion that competitive sports contribute to individual growth and development is deeply rooted in our culture.

> General Douglas McArthur: [Sport] is a vital character builder. It molds the youth of our country for their roles as custodians of the republic. It teaches them to be strong enough to know they are weak, and brave enough to face themselves when they are afraid. It teaches them to be proud and unbending in honest defeat, but humble and gentle in victory . . . . Fathers and mothers who would make their sons into men should have them participate in [sports].

> Sociologist David Riesman: The road to the board room leads through the locker room.
> Gerald Ford: Broadly speaking, outside of a national character and an educated society, there are few things more important to a country's growth and well-being than competitive athletics. If it is cliché to say athletics build character as well as muscle, then I subscribe to the cliché. (Tutko & Bruns, 1976, pp. 41-42)

If sports has the potential to build character, might it also have the potential to destroy character.

> For every positive psychological or social outcome in sports, there are possible negative outcomes. For example, sports can offer a child group membership or group exclusion, acceptance or rejection, positive feedback or negative feedback, a sense of accomplishment or a sense of failure, evidence of self-worth or lack of evidence of self-worth. Likewise sports can develop cooperation and a concern for others, but they can also develop intense rivalry and a complete lack of concern for others. (Orlick, 1974, p. 2)

The purpose of the writer of this paper is to explore the effects of sports participation on the character of the participants. With sports making up a major portion of the recreation programs offered in the United States, recreation practioners need to be interested in those effects. The National Recreation and Park Association has pointed out that need.

> But we also think park and recreation agencies and organizations have a responsibility to take

the questions about competition more seriously than they have in the past and an obligation to provide alternatives within the programming spectrum. Park and recreation people must examine their goals; the movement should be among those seeking answers. (The Competitive Question, 1975, p. 15)

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The New Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary (1971) defines character as "the complex of mental and ethical traits marking a person or a group." (p. 82) There are three basic areas of research which relate to the relationship of character to sports participation--psychological or personality traits, attitudes and beliefs, and success at achieving socially valued behavior. This literature review will examine each of these areas.

One of the problems associated with examining sports is definitional. Do sports and athletics mean the same thing? Loy, et. al. (1978) defined sport as a subset of play and athletics as a subset of work. Modern sport could be said to lie near the midpoint of a continuum with work and play as the end points. (pp. 21-23)

For the purpose of this paper, sports and athletics will be considered to be synonymous. Few studies make any distinction between the two terms. Most of the research has involved participants in interscholastic athletics at the high school and college levels. Since most recreation sports programs are modeled after high school, college, and professional athletics, generalization from athletics to sports is possible.

A number of acronyms and abbreviations will be used throughout the literature review in the interest of brevity. They are listed below.

ACT	American College Test
CPI	California Psychological Inventory
EPPS	Edwards Personal Preference Schedule
GPA	Grade Point Average
GPP	Gordon Personal Profile
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
MMPI	Minnesota Multi-phasic Personality Inventory
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
16PF	Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor Test

Personality and Sports

Three basic types of research have been conducted in relation to personality and sports--the measurement of personality inventories and profiles, self-concept, and locus of control. These measurments are often coupled with examination of intelligence, scholastic aptitude and scholastic achievement.

Personality Inventories

Carter and Shannon (1940) measured the personality differences between male athletes and non-athletes in high schools. They used the Symonds Adjustment Questionnaire and teacher ratings of adjustment. They found no difference between the two groups on the Symonds Questionnaire but did find that teachers rated the athletes as more adjusted than the non-athletes.

The association between athletic skill competence and the social and personal adjustment of male high school students was examined by Buddulph (1954). Using an athletic skills test he selected the 50 most highly skilled and 50 most poorly skilled out of a total sample of 461. The two groups were compared through the use of the California Test of Personality, the Hennon-Nelson Intelligence Test, teacher ratings, and peer ratings. The group that was highly skilled was found to be more socially adjusted than the poorly skilled group. The use of such atypical and extreme groups for comparison makes generalization from this study difficult.

Seymour (1956) examined the effect of Little League Baseball participation on eight to twelve year old boys. He compared scores by Little League participants and non-participants on the Scientific Research Associates Junior Inventory, the Winnetka Scale for Rating School Behavior (teacher appraisal) and the Ohio Social Acceptance Scale (peer appraisal). The tests were administered both before and after baseball season. He found no differnce between the changes in the two groups on the SRA Inventory with the exception of the Getting Along With Others dimension. The participants' ratings on leadership from teachers and social acceptance from peers increased at greater rates than those of the non-participants.

Booth (1958) compared the MMPI scores of male college athletes and non-athletes of various academic levels. He found some differences between athletes and non-athletes but the differences varied with the class standing of the subjects. Booth concluded that there are some personality differences between athletes and non-athletes.

The interaction of motor ability and athletic participation as they relate to personality was examined by Keogh (1959). Through the use of the Larson Test of Motor Ability he was able to assign nearly equal numbers of male college students to nine experimental groups at three levels of athletic participation (varsity, intramural, non-athlete) and three levels of motor skill development (high, middle, low). The results of rank order analysis of the scores on the California Psychological Inventory suggested that the subjects participating in athletics at the level most appropriate for their skill levels had the most favorable psychological profiles.

Slusher (1964) compared the MMPI scores of non-athletes, basketball players, baseball players, football players, swimmers, and wrestlers. The results of the study indicated a great deal of variation between the different athletic groups as they compare to non-athletes on personality measures.

Cooper (1969), in his review of the literature on athletics and personality, concluded that the research painted a picture of the athlete as being more outgoing,

socially confident, socially aggressive, dominant, and leading; having higher social adjustment, prestige, and social status; being stronger competitors, less anxious, more emotionally stable, and less compulsive; having a greater tolerance for physical pain; and having lower feminine interests than non-athletes.

A longitudinal study of the effects of athletic participation on the cadets at West Point was conducted by Werner (1961). He administered Cattell's 16PF to a class of cadets on their entry into the Military Academy and after completing their four years of schooling which included mandatory athletic participation. He found no difference in the change in personality between the cadets who had participated in high school athletics and those who had not. Although valuable because of its longitudinal design, Werner's findings are limited by the atypical nature of the cadets.

King and Chi (1974) found differences between groups of male college athletes and non-athletes on six of the 16PF dimensions. They found no differences between participants in different sports but found differences on six dimensions between those who had participated in athletics for one year and those who had participated for two or more years. Athletes were found to be more conscientious, tough minded, practical, conservative, and group dependent and less intelligent than non-athletes.

Mendall (1974) compared participants in college intramural sports programs and non-participants on measures of

ACT scores, GPA, and 16PF scores. He found differences between the groups on 7 of the 16PF dimensions. He found no differences between the subjects on ACT scores, university GPA, or high school GPA.

Joesting and Whitehead (1976) administered the 16PF to female students in a women's studies course and female varsity golfers. They found the women's studies students to be more tough minded, venturesome, and imaginative than the golfers. No differences were found between outstanding golfers and those of average ability.

O'Connor and Webb (1976) administered the 16PF to female college athletes and non-athletes. The athletes and non-athletes differed on four of the 16PF dimensions--intelligence, radicalism, self-sufficiency, and self-control. Variation was found among participants in different sports as they compared to non-athletes.

Outstanding football players, average football players, and non-athletes were compared by Berger and Littlefield (1969) on measures of CPI and SAT scores. Initial analysis indicated differences between the three groups on CPI scores. After controlling for differences between the groups on SAT scores, there was no difference in CPI scores. This study is interesting because of the researchers' recognition of the possible effects of external variables.

Schendel (1965, 1968) conducted studies which provide some longitudinal results. The 1965 study included male athletes and non-athletes in the 9th and 12th grades and in college. The CPI was administered to the 330 subjects.

The 9th and 12th grade athletes had more favorable psychological profiles than the 9th and 12th grade non-athletes. For the college students the non-athletes had more favorable profiles than the athletes. The study suggested that athletes may have advantages in psychological development in the high school years but lose that advantage in later years.

Schendel reported in 1968 on his second administration of the CPI to the students making up the 9th grade sample in the 1965 study. Three years had passed between the two administrations of the CPI. Although specific psychological differences were found between the athlete and non-athlete groups at both ages, the differences were greater and more numerous at the 9th grade level than at the 12th grade level. Schendel speculates that the socio-psychological maturation rate of the athlete may be accelerated at an earlier age than the non-athlete, but the gap between the two groups narrows during the later years of high school. (p. 93)

F. Martens (1974) administered the CPI to male athletes and non-athletes in the 9th and 10th grades. He also examined their year end grades in five school subjects. For both grade levels the athletes were found to be more sociable and have greater self-acceptance than the non-athletes. The only difference in year end grades between athletes and non-athletes was in physical education where the athletes received higher grades.

Jericho (1972) measured the relationship of certain personality needs to participation, perseverence, and performance in an adult recreational baseball league. The EPPS was administered to all the league participants. The participants showed lower need for order, dominance, nurturance, and change and higher need for deference, exhibition, autonomy, abasement, and aggression than the norms for college age males. Those who persevered in the program revealed a higher need for achievement and endurance and a lower need for dominance and aggression than those who dropped out prior to the end of the season. There were also differences between high and low performers.

Fletcher (1971) administered the EPPS to 950 freshman male college students along with a questionnaire about activity participation during high school. He found a positive correlation between high physical activity in high school and the need for affiliation, dominance, heterosexuality, aggression, and exhibition. He found a negative correlation between high activity and the needs for deference, order, succorance, abasement, and endurance.

Stoner and Bandy (1977) administered the EPPS to female college athletes in team and individual sports and non-athletes. The non-athlete group was found to be lower in need for deference and higher in need for change, intraception, and heterosexuality than the team sports group. The non-athletes were found to be higher in need for intraception and change than the individual sports group.

The moral character and personality differences of male high school athletes and non-athletes were examined by Ruperts (1969). He administered the Hoffman Moral Index and the California F Scale along with ego and background questionnaires. IQ scores and GPAs were obtained from the school records. Ruperts found the non-athlete group to be more humanistic than the athlete group, less oriented toward conventional norms, and less achievement oriented.

Through cluster analysis, Ruperts identified four clusters of athletes that contained 64 percent of the athletes. Cluster I was characterized by low IQ, high authoritarianism, and preference for obedience and conventional moral values. Cluster II was described as hedonistic rebellious, and unstable on judgments made in response to moral conflict. Cluster III was characterized by rigidly conventional moral principles and little consideration for human concerns. Cluster IV was predominantly altruistic and responsive to extenuating circumstances. Based on his personal interviews with representative subjects, Ruperts suggested that both positive and negative traits may be reinforced by athletic experience.

Hunt (1969) administered the GPP to white and Negro athletes and non-athletes. He found that the white athletes scored higher on ascendency, responsibility, and emotional stability than the white non-athletes. The Negro athletes scored higher on responsibility than the Negro non-athletes.

There were no differences between the Negro and white athletes, between the Negro and white non-athletes, or between the Negro athletes and white non-athletes. The white athletes scored higher on ascendancy, emotional stability, and responsibility than the Negro non-athletes.

Based on their research and clinical experience, Ogilvie and Tutko (1971) concluded that athletes who survive the selection process which is common at all levels of sport can be characterized by some common traits. Most athletes have a great need for achievement and tend to set themselves high goals. Most athletes are highly organized, respectful of authority, and need to be dominant. Most athletes have a large capacity for trust, have great self-control, have low levels of anxiety, and a slightly greater ability to express aggression.

Locus of Control

A less frequently studied variable of athletic participation has been locus of control. DiGiuseppe (1973) administered the Rotter I-E Scale to male high school students. They were classified into four groups according to their athletic participation--team sports participants, individual sports participants, intramural participants, and non-participants. No significant differences in locus of control were found between the four groups.

Lynn, Phelan, and Kiker (1969) administered the Rotter I-E Scale to high school basketball players, gymnasts, and students judged by teachers to be completely alienated from school activities. Examination of the IQ scores revealed no differences in the three groups. The basketball group was found to be more inner controlled than either of the other two groups. There was no difference in the locus of control of the gymnasts and alienated student groups. The value of this study would seem to be somewhat diminished by the selection of completely alienated students as the control group.

Gilliland (1974) administered the Rotter I-E Scale to six groups of college students--male and female, team sports participants, individual sports participants, and non-participants. He found no differences in locus of control due to sex, athletic participation, or the interaction of the two factors.

McCutcheon and Phillips (1976) examined interest and participation in sports as they relate to beliefs about human nature. The Philosophies of Human Nature Scale and an attitudes about sports questionnaire were administered to male and female college students. No differences were found on the Human Nature Scale between males with high and low participation in sports. Females with high participation were found to be more likely to have an internal locus of control and believe in the complexity of humans than those with low sports participation.

Self-Concept

Snyder and Kilvin (1974, 1975) examined measures of psychological well-being and body image for female athletes and non-athletes. Differences in physical size between the athlete and non-athlete groups were negligible. The findings indicated a positive relationship between athletic participation and psychological well-being. The athletes had much more positive feelings about their bodies. The conclusiveness of this study may have been due in part to the selection of lnly athletes from national and international competitions for the athlete sample.

Ibrahim and Morrison (1976) administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and the Schostrom Personal Orientation Inventory to athletes and non-athletes at the high school and college levels. Eight experimental groups were selected--male and female athletes and non-athletes at each scholastic level. The male high school athletes and non-athletes differed on seven of the fifteen self-concept variables and four of the twelve self-actualization acales. Female college athletes and non-athletes differed on seven of the twelve self-actualization scales but not on any of the self-concept scales. There were no differences on either scale between the female high school athletes and non-athletes or the male college athletes and non-athletes.

The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale was used by Vincent (1976) to compare female college athletes, non-athletes, P.E. majors, non-P.E. majors, former high school athletes, and former high school non-athletes. She found that the P.E. majors had higher self-concept scores than any of the other groups, with the exception of the former high school athletes. The former high school athletes had higher self-concept scores than all other groups except the P.E. majors. The only difference between athletes and non-athletes was on the family-self subscale where the non-athletes scored higher.

Monseau (1977) administered the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale to male students in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades six weeks prior to treatment and after treatment. The students were assigned to five treatment groups--basketball participation, wrestling participation, basketball instruction, wrestling instruction, and control. The treatments lasted for 30 consecutive school days. No significant differences were found in the rates of change in self-concept between the groups. Since the sports groups all experienced greater positive shifts in self-concept than the control group, Monseau speculated that a longer time frame for the experiment might have resulted in significant differences.

Discussion

Although the volume of literature on personality and psychological characteristics as they relate to sport and athletics is considerable, the literature is confusing, somewhat contradictory, and inconclusive. Many studies have found no or little difference between athletes and non-athletes while others have found significant differences. As Singer (1975) pointed out, we cannot be sure to what extent these differences existed before sports participation, were caused by sports participation, or were caused by the interaction of these two factors. (p. 97)

One problem with the interpretation of the literature is the variety of instrumentation and samples. Stevenson (1975) counted twelve different psychological testing instruments used in this research, ranging from well-tested reliable instruments like the MMPI and 16PF to totally untested instruments. He also noted the diversity of samples including a variety of age groups, sport types, and competitive levels. (p. 289) Stevenson (1975) stated that he believed there was support for the characterization of athletes as:

> being more toughminded, more dominant, more self-reliant, more extrovert, more emotionally stable, more self-confident, more self-disciplined, more aggressive, more sociable, more conventional in responses to social situations, and as having a lesser need to be nurtured, than nonparticipants. (p. 292)

Singer (1975) proposed that the only way to find the true effects of sport participation on personality was to study a group over a long period of time. The existing longitudinal studies (Schendel, 1968; Werner, 1961) were of relatively short duration and did not examine sports participants younger than high school age. A longitudinal study on personality from the youngest level of athletic participation through adulthood is needed.

Studies by Keogh (1959) and Berger and Littlefield (1969) demonstrated the interaction of personality variables with other variables such as intelligence and scholastic aptitude. Most research to date has failed to control for these variables. With so many environmental factors affecting individuals, it is dangerous to attribute personality changes to sports participation alone. (Singer, 1975)

Behavioral Studies

The study of social behavior as it relates to sports participation has concentrated on three areas. Many studies have been conducted on academic achievement as it relates to athletic participation. The notion that sports participation prevents juvenile delinquency is often discussed, but relatively few studies have examined that relationship. One study has been identified which examined the relation of athletics and occupational attainment.

Academic Achievement

As discussed earlier in this paper, Mendell (1974) found no difference in the GPA of college intramural sports participants and non-participants. F. Martens (1974) found that the only difference in grades between groups of 9th and 10th grade athletes and non-athletes was in physical education.

Davis and Cooper (1934) reviewed over 200 studies completed from 1900 to 1934 which examined the relationship of athletic participation and high school and college scholarship. Their conclusion was that non-athletes appeared to be slightly superior scholastically to athletes, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Eidsmoe (1961) examined the academic achievement of the male and female basketball players in the Iowa Substate Basketball Tournaments. He compared the GPA of the basketball players to the total student bodies of their high schools and found the basketball players to have a higher GPA. In a similar study, Eidsmoe (1964) found that the GPA of the players on the top 30 high school football teams in Iowa was higher than that of the total student bodies of their schools.

Comparing groups of high school athletes and non-athletes matched for the variables of IQ, father's occupation, and junior high school GPA, Schafer and Armer (1968) found that athletes had a higher high school GPA than non-athletes. They also found that athletes were much more likely to finish high school than non-athletes.

Phillips and Shafer (1971) reviewed the literature on the consequences of sports participation. They concluded that athletes from low endowment backgrounds (low IQ, low SES) received the most pronounced benefit in academic achievement from athletic participation. They also concluded that athletes were less likely to exhibit deviant behavior and had a greater probability of upward social mobility.

The grades of students at Texas Tech University were examined by Davis and Berger (1973). They compared the overall GPA, required course GPA, high school GPA, and SAT scores of randomly selected groups of male athletes and non-athletes. They found no differences between the GPA or SAT scores of the two groups.

Becher (1975) examined the influence of athletic participation on the academic achievement, absenteeism, and social behavior of 8th grade students. He found no differences between the two groups on grades or absenteeism. There was no difference between the athletes and non-athletes in the disciplinary problems documented by school, police, and juvenile bureau records.

Hendry and Douglass (1975) studied the relationships among personality, academic achievement, and sports participation of British university students. They found no relationship between sports participation and academic achievement.

Data from the 1970 Explorations in Equality of Opportunity Survey and a 1955 study by the Educational Testing Service was used by Hanks and Ecklund (1976) to examine the relationship of sports and other activity participation to academic achievement. The sample included over 2,000 subjects who had completed questionnaires in 1955 as sophomores in high school and again in 1970. They concluded that athletic participation appeared to neither depress nor especially enhance the academic performance of the participants.

Delinquency

As discussed earlier, Becher (1975) found no difference in the number of documented disciplinary problems between groups of 8th grade athletes and non-athletes. Schafer (1969) searched juvenile court records for evidence of delinquent behavior by subjects in his sample of 585 male high school students. He found a negative correlation between athletic participation and record of delinquent behavior. After comparing groups matched for father's occupation and GPA, the relationship was found only for low achieving boys from blue collar backgrounds.

Yiannakis (1976) administered the Jesness Inventory to 66 boys 11 years of age enrolled in a summer sports program. He found that those who did not complete the program had a social index closer to that predicted for delinquent individuals than those who completed the program. He also found the dropouts to have lower occupational aspirations.

Hunter (1974) administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and the Felder Sports Interest Questionnaire to groups of Mexican-American and Caucaisian juvenile delinquents in a state correctional institution. He found that the two groups differed significantly on three of the nine self-concept dimensions measured. He found that neither group was very interested in sports. Neither group believed that their parents had encouraged them to participate in sports or that their fathers had been interested in sports as youths or adults.

Occupational Attainment

In 1975 Dubois (1978) mailed questionnaires asking for data on work experience, educational attainment, extra-curricular activities, and other background to 160 athletes and 450 non-athletes who had been seniors at three San Francisco universities in 1973. They found no difference between the athletes and non-athletes in relation to GPA or father's occupational prestige. The two groups had very similar occupational prestige scores but the non-athlete group did report higher average salaries than the athlete group. Regression analysis, however, revealed that the difference in salary was the result of differences in age and amount of work experience between the two groups rather than athletic status. Dubois concluded that the notion of sports being a stepping stone to high occupational status is a myth.

Discussion

The research on academic achievement has mixed results. Some studies report no relationship between athletic participation and academic achievement. An almost equal number of studies report that athletes earn higher grades than non-athletes. Schafer (1968) offered eight possible explanations for findings that athletes earn higher grades than non-athletes: (1) Athletes may be graded more leniently by teachers because of a halo effect; (2) Perhaps the values of hard work, persistance, and winning have spillover into other endeavors; (3) Superior physical conditioning may improve mental ability; (4) Athletes may be given higher grades than they deserve so that they can maintain eligibility; (5) Athletes make better use of their more limited study time; (6) The lure of a college career in sports may motivate them to better grades; (7) The high prestige from sports may give athletes a better self-concept; and (8) Athletes may receive more academic help from friends, teachers, and parents. (p. 25)

The weight of evidence suggests a positive correlation between athletic participation and academic achievement as measured by grades. The cause and effect relationship has yet to be established.

The studies on delinquency suggest a negative correlation between athletic participation and delinquent behavior. Here again the cause and effect relationship is not clear. It may be that those with delinquent tendencies have no interest in sports and a self-selection process is in effect as suggested by the results that Yiannakis (1976) reported.

Stevenson (1975) thought the results of research may warrant the conclusion that sport participation is a positive moral influence. (p. 294) Singer (1975), however, warned that sports should not be seen as a panacea to solve our crime problems. (p. 104) The relationship between sports and delinquent behavior needs to be researched more completely.

Based on the results of one study, the notion that sports participation is facilitative of occupational attainment must be questioned. One study is hardly conclusive evidence, however.

Attitudinal Studies

The relationship of sports participation to attitudes has involved three areas of research pertinent to this paper--sportsmanship, racial attitudes, and political attitudes.

Sportsmanship

Ethical conduct in sports situations was examined by Richardson (1962). He administered the sportsmanship test developed by Haskins and Hartman to male senior college P.E. majors. He found that the athletes in the sample scored lower on sportsmanship than the non-athletes. None of the P.E. majors scored very high on sportsmanship.

Lakie (1964) administered the Competitive Attitude Scale to 228 college varsity athletes to measure to what extent they subscribed to a "win at all cost" philosophy in

sport. The sample included athletes from a variety of sports and a variety of college types. Lakie found no differences in the sportsmanship attitudes of the athletes by sports or school types. He noted that none of the athlete groups exhibited "good sportsmanship."

Slusher (1966) used an electronic psychometer to differentiate between the overt and covert responses of athletes to a visual sportsmanship test. He tested groups of athletes rated by coaches as displaying exceptionally good or poor sportsmanship. He found the overt responses of the two groups to the sportsmanship test to differ significantly. The covert responses of the groups were not significantly different, with neither group being very sportsmanlike.

Racial Attitudes

Sargeant (1972) studied the participation of students of West Indian origin in sports programs at a British boys school. He found that the rate of participation in sports was higher for the West Indian students than for the white students. He observed that there was no increase in the interactions between the races due to sports participation.

Wilson and Kayatani (1968) examined racial attitudes after competition in a version of the Prisoner's Dilemma game. Attitudes toward members of the opposing teams were measured after inter-racial and intra-racial competition between racially homogeneous teams of Caucaisian and

Japanese-American students in Hawaii. Wilson and Kayatani concluded that race was not in any way related to in-game decision making or post-game attitudes toward opposing players.

A study by Wright (1975) was more directly related to the purpose of this review. A questionnaire designed to measure willingness to associate with other racial groups in a variety of social settings was administered to 468 students in five integrated urban high schools. Wright found that athletic involvement had no relationship to the willingness to associate biracially.

Political Attitudes

Stern (1972) observed that the notion that sports builds character and contributes to good citizenship has become axiomatic in all almost political systems. He investigated the use of sports by governments as a possible source of social learning.

Questionnaires were administered to 1,500 male high school students in Chile to measure their sports participation and political attitudes and supply background information. He found that participation in sports appeared to be associated with a general acceptance of society's authority structure. A somewhat consistent pattern of positive correlations was observed between sports participation and perceptions of authority figures and acceptance of rules. Stern concluded that the results tend to confirm the notion that sports acts as an agency of official social control.

Discussion

The evidence available indicates a negative correlation between sports participation and attitudes of good sportsmanship. The cause and effect relationship has not been established. Singer (1975) pointed out the importance of the athletic situation to the effect of sports participation on sportsmanship.

> We can certainly question the theory that participation in sport and good sportsmanship go hand-in-hand. It may be true in some situations. But by in large, it does appear that intensive sports competition in many cases requires the participants to adjust to the real world, thus resulting in the development of values that could be considered practical and realistic or degrading and detrimental to sport, depending on one's interpretation. (p. 105)

Research provides no evidence to confirm the common belief that participation in sports with members of another racial group reduces discrimination against that racial group. Since the studies discussed were completed in three different cultural settings, it would be unwise to generalize from their results, even though they are supportive of each other.

The similarities between coaches and civil authorities and between sports rules and civil laws would suggest a positive correlation between sports participation and political stability. Stern's (1972) study confirms this relationship.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

With the existing evidence it is impossible to state whether sports is or is not character building. The evidence is far from conclusive.

> Although some population differences have been shown between athletes and nonathletes, and although some positive relationships have been demonstrated between certain characteristics and participation in sport, the serious methodological inadequacies of the research effectively damns any attempt at generalization. One very clear conclusion must be, however, that to date there is no valid evidence that participation in sport causes any verifiable socialization effects. The stated educational legitimation of physical education and of athletics must, therfore, remain in the realm of "belief" and should not be treated as "fact." (Stevenson, 1975, p. 299)

The methodological problems that Stevenson refered to included the use of invlaid and problematic instrumentation and poor sample selection and treatment.

A great variety of instruments have been used to measure personality and attitudes, making it difficult to compare the results of different researchers. Is it valid to compare the results of research conducted with different personality measurement instruments? Self-confidence as measured by the

MMPI may not be the same thing as self-confidence measured by the CPI. Some consistency in instrumentation would greatly add to the weight of future research findings.

Sample selection has been questionable in much of the research. The possibility that the athletes may have been different from the non-athletes before participation is generally not considered. Athletes are selected for participation on a team for a variety of reasons beside their athletic ability. It may be that characteristics such as academic ability, intelligence, attitudes, and personality influence the coach's selection of a player for the team. Those characteristics may also affect an individual's desire to participate in sports. The studies by Berger and Littlefield (1969), Keogh (1959), and Schafer and Armer (1968) demonstrated the need to match the sample groups on variables other than those being tested.

In addition to these methodological problems there are problems with generalizing the results to apply to recreational sports programs. It would not be valid to assume that ten year old Pop Warner football players are exposed to the same influences as varsity football players at a major university. There must be some similarity, but no one knows how much similarity. With the exception of a few studies of Little League Baseball players and intramural sports participants, the effect of recreational sports has not been researched.

Research to date has failed to establish a cause and effect relationship between sports participation and character development. Schendel (1968) took a step beyond other researchers toward establishing a cause and effect relationship, but the rather short three year length of his study did not provide very conclusive evidence. More longitudinal research is needed.

Longitudinal studies beginning with the subjects' earliest participation in organized sports and continuing to adulthood would probably answer many questions. Without more pressing need for answers, the probability of such lengthy research being conducted is doubtful.

Another area which needs to be researched is the effect of different coachings styles and league philosophies on the character development of the participants. Several authors (Gelfund & Hartmann, 1976; R. Martens, 1976; Tutko & Bruns, 1976) have proposed improvements in the operation of competitive sports programs. Their suggestions are founded on experience and common sense rather than empirical evidence.

The belief that sports builds character is deeply rooted in our society. Participation in sports is generally accepted as being beneficial to everyone, even though there are examples all around us of detrimental outcomes. Until research discovers the changes that sports participation can cause and the circumstances under which it can cause them, there will be an element of risk involved in participation in organized sports.

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